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**European Integration in
Polish Political Debates
1997-1998**

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Main Conclusions

1. All the political parties and blocs which won seats in parliament in the September 1997 elections declared support for European integration. However, the pro-European consensus cracked and an openly anti-European group emerged during the period between October 1997 and November 1998.
2. The greatest political threat posed to the process of Poland's integration with the European Union is the tendency to turn political debates into ideological confrontation between the political left and right. The key division line is not so much between the pro- and anti-European forces, but rather artificially established and stimulated divisions among those declaring support for integration.
3. One of the ideological stereotypes that paralyse integration debates is the alleged division into the supporters of 'tough' and 'obedient' negotiations with Brussels. If 'tough negotiations' are meant to imply talks aiming to achieve longer transition periods, their result will be a second class membership for Poland, which is exactly what their supporters promise to prevent.
4. The tendency towards giving priority to efforts aimed at preserving a clear and coherent ideological outlook of the main political parties (the right vs. the left), over technical, economic and administrative decisions related to integration, continued during the years 1997 and 1998. The most evident example of that subordination has been the conflict over the institutional placement and control of the European Integration Committee. Thus, in Poland, we are dealing with a problem opposite to what has been described as a deficit of democracy in the European Union, where the discussion has been centred around delineating the boundaries within which bureaucratic decisions may take priority over politics.
5. An ideological polarisation of the political arena may pose a threat from the point of view of the future accession agreement whose ratification must follow strict constitutional requirements. Therefore, the goal of the debates held should be to seek a lasting, non-partisan agreement on behalf of integration, so that the negotiated terms of Poland's accession to the Union could enjoy support both by the broad public, and by the main political parties.

Introduction

The 1997 parliamentary election campaign showed that the main political forces in Poland had accepted integration with the European Union as one of the main directions of the Polish foreign policy. However, the general consensus on the matter was not accompanied by a more in-depth debate concerning the goals and principles of integration. On the other hand, differences of attitude held towards integration could be observed between political parties, and even within parties.¹ These differences were manifest in the form of objections concerning the desirable pace of integration, or in critical statements made about the Euro-enthusiasts. A distinct character of one's attitude towards the matter was also stressed through demands put forward regarding a proper course of the accession talks that were yet to begin at the time.

Another major difference in the attitude held by political parties towards European integration issues was related to the harmonisation of Polish legislation with the *acquis communautaire*, or in a broader sense, to the fulfilment of specific political and economic requirements set for Poland in connection with the integration process. Having compared the "Opinion on the Level of Readiness of the Candidate Countries," including Poland, published by the European Commission with the manifestos of political parties, one could see that a strong stress placed on supporting integration as a foreign policy goal was not always accompanied by an equal determination to undertake the necessary internal reforms.²

These two factors, a lack of the concept of goals of integration and a failure to realise the need to undertake adjustment measures, made up the superficial consensus on integration.³ A look at the political developments in Poland during the period from

¹ See: Kucharczyk J., "Za, a nawet przeciw": partie polityczne wobec perspektyw integracji europejskiej w wyborach '97 [Political Parties and the Perspectives of European Integration in the 1997 Elections], research report published by the Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw 1997.

² Ibid.

³ Cf. Skotnicka-Illasiewicz E., *Powrót czy droga w nieznaną? Europejskie dylematy Polaków* [A Return or Going to the Unknown? Poles' European Dilemmas], second edition, Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1998; Hausner J., "Polityczne stimulatory i bariery integracji europejskiej" [Political incentives and barriers to European integration] in *Przystąpienie czy integracja?*

October 1997 till November 1998 shows that that agreement among the main political forces was broken. When the deputies to the Sejm who were connected with the Catholic Radio Maryja, left the Solidarity Elections Action (AWS) caucus and established the parliamentary group Nasze Koło [Our Circle], a definitely anti-European group was for the first time formed in Polish parliament. As a result of the split, Rodzina Polska [Polish Family] ran in the subsequent local government elections as an independent party which clearly opposed Poland's membership in the European Union.

A review of debates held in the Sejm and in the Senate, which constitutes the subject of this study, shows that the scope of issues linked with European integration expanded during the period discussed. That expansion and deepening of integration issues was to a large extent brought about by the launching of formal accession talks with the European Union, starting from 31 March 1998, and the screening of Polish legislation in terms of its compatibility with Community legislation. New legislative proposals are now also being reviewed in terms of compatibility with Community legislation, although initially, the relevant formal requirement concerned only the proposals put forward by the government. On the other hand, that shortfall reflects one of the most typical aspects of activities undertaken by the ruling circles during the period discussed, namely problems with the establishment of an appropriate institutional framework to enable the undertaking of efficient adjustment measures and to provide support for the Polish negotiating team.⁴

However, the institutional confusion was not predominantly a 'technical matter' that could be resolved with the use of purely administrative measures. Some of the problems certainly resulted from the general institutional weakness of the Polish state, but political factors related to the situation at the outset of the period discussed, i.e., results of the parliamentary elections held in September 1997, seem to play a much greater role. The consensus on integration that existed among the main Polish political blocs and parties, including, Solidarity Elections Action (AWS), the Democratic Left

Polska droga do Unii Europejskiej [Accession or Integration? Poland's Path to the European Union], Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Warsaw, March 1998.

⁴ At the time when this report was being completed, a private members' bill was put forward to amend the rules of procedure of the Sejm. The bill concerned the legislative procedure and provided for the requirement of legislative initiatives proposed as private members' bills being reviewed in terms of compatibility with Community legislation. The relevant opinion is to be pronounced by the European Integration Committee.

Alliance (SLD) and the Freedom Union (UW), was not based on a similar understanding of the goals and tasks of the integration process. Therefore, the decision making process was difficult and the activities undertaken by the government coalition were slowed down. Furthermore, personal and competence conflicts recurring at the time, diverted attention from political conflicts which did not have a chance to come to the foreground in parliament because they might lead to a split within the AWS-UW government coalition. The attempts to avoid a political crisis by easing the tension through administrative channels resulted in a series of more or less open conflicts (over the appointment and placement of the chief Polish negotiator for the accession talks, conflicts related to the European Integration Committee), with the final loss of 34 million ECU taken away from the Polish share of the EU grant assistance programme PHARE. That loss of aid funds (or more specifically, the subsequent replacement of the European Integration Committee chairman) led to a crisis followed by the emergence of a group openly opposing integration in the Sejm, and the consensus on Poland's integration with the European Union was broken.

This course of developments has created a chance, but only a chance, for the pro-European forces to establish an agreement more lasting than before. A review of last year's events shows clumsy attempts to cover up the differences and to postpone discussion by pushing it off to a 'technical' level. In our report after the 1997 elections we wrote:

*In the short run, the lack of a serious discussion during which conflicting positions would be formulated clearly, is convenient for the politicians who, encouraged by the public's support for the pro-European orientation, can focus on the technical aspect of the integration process, on negotiating its terms on the one hand, or internal reform proposals on the other.*⁵

Results of opinion polls published in the past year indicate a gradual fall in the public's support for integration. That trend has been accompanied by a growing number of confused respondents who have no clear opinion on the matter, and therefore, declare that they will not take part in a possible referendum on Poland's accession to the

⁵ Kucharczyk J., op. cit.

European Union. The survey results were interpreted by the minority opposing integration as a sign of the public's weakening support for a pro-European policy.⁶

Under these circumstances, there was an urgent need to review the factors underlying the current situation and its consequences. This report shows how the attitudes held by the main Polish political parties towards integration evolved. The study looks at major points in that evolution, including the establishment of the AWS-UW coalition and the division of government posts among the two partners, the launching of accession talks with the European Union and the debates that accompanied the event in the Sejm and in the Senate, the conflict related to the slashing of Poland's share of the EU grant assistance programme PHARE'98, and the reshuffle in top positions in the European Integration Committee Office. The local government elections held in the autumn of 1998 may also constitute a certain point of reference because one of the political organisations running in the elections, namely Rodzina Polska [Polish Family] not only openly contested integration, but even based its political identity on opposing the process. Apart from that, the election returns confirmed the domination of the Polish political arena by two blocs, but also the fact that the PSL peasant party continued to be a major player, regardless of its weak representation in parliament. These two factors, i.e., the polarisation of the political arena and the position of the PSL, have and will continue to produce a major impact on processes related to integration. An analysis of that impact is the subject of this report.

The AWS-UW Coalition and the Formation of the Buzek Cabinet

The issue of Poland's accession to the European Union should not pose problems in the light of the manifestos of the two political parties that undertook to form the new government coalition after the parliamentary elections held in September 1997. Solidarity Elections Action (AWS) declared in its manifesto support for "a Europe of free nations

⁶ Shortly before the local government elections Jan Łopuszański from Nasze Koło demanded that the referendum be held without a delay, and without waiting until the accession talks were completed. At the beginning his idea was supported by the PSL peasant party which, for some time, had been campaigning in favour of the referendum. However, the PSL quickly withdrew its backing when the party realised that supporters of the referendum were in a losing position because a vast majority of Poles would vote in favour of accession to the EU regardless of the fall in support for integration. Cf. "Pytanie o referendum," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 September 1998.

as a Europe of Nations.” The AWS manifesto also stated that accession to the EU should stimulate Poland’s economic growth, and that therefore, support was required for democratic and market reforms. The latter aspect in particular seems to be close to the political programme of the Freedom Union (UW) whose manifesto for the elections pointed to the strengthening of Polish political and economic institutions in order to meet EU requirements, as one of the main tasks related to integration with the Union. Thus, the new government was not meant to negotiate easier terms of accession for Poland, but to implement structural reforms that would ensure the efficiency of national institutions as well as economic growth. The stress placed on the need to undertake fundamental structural reforms after four years of neglect by the previous government coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the PSL peasant party, was clearly a common point of the AWS and the UW manifestos.⁷

Under these circumstances, the problem posed for the new coalition that was being formed, was not so much a need for the two partners to agree on policy issues, but rather the internal coherence of the AWS. The manifesto of the AWS bloc pointed to participation in the establishment of unity on the continent, that would refer to “the Christian roots of our civilisation” as being the main goal of integration. That statement was general enough to be accepted by both the declared supporters of integration with the European Union from the 100 Movement, and by the Christian National Union (ZChN) or by politicians linked with the Catholic Radio Maryja, who avoided expressing such clear support for the process. That formula also encompassed the position held by the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) and its leader Adam Słomka who, during the election campaign, accused the European Union of treating Poland as “a peripheral area intended for exploitation and not partnership.” That open formula which proved effective during the creation of the government coalition, started to pose problems during attempts to translate it into specific political decisions.

Already during the negotiations of the government coalition agreement the public was getting signals about arguments over the clause concerning integration with the European Union. Finally, the agreement stated that “priority goals adopted by the

⁷ Cf. Kucharczyk, op. cit. A review of the manifestos put forward for the elections shows that both the UW and the AWS embraced in their programmes a number of issues which the *Opinion of the European Commission* considered vital and requiring urgent action as preconditions of integration.

coalition partners on behalf of prosperity and well-being of the Republic of Poland” included:

Ensuring Poland's security through the soonest possible achievement of membership of the North Atlantic Pact and a reform of the armed forces, as well as strengthening the country's international political and economic position, also through preparing and effectively conducting negotiations related to Poland's accession to the European Union.

On the other hand, the policy statement presented to the Sejm by Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek was written in the spirit of the AWS manifesto. The fragments concerning integration with the European Union clearly took up less space than references made to NATO, and, characteristically, they were written in an elliptical language. For example, already at the beginning of his policy statement, the premier quoted a fragment of the AWS manifesto referring to the building a Poland “that would be safe thanks to the membership of the North Atlantic Pact.” He also said,

We want to become as soon as possible a fully-fledged member of the Euro-Atlantic Community which, in today's world, provides the most important guarantee for the development of civilisation based on a free market and democracy, on the freedom of individuals and nations. There is no better guarantee of a sovereign Poland than NATO.

Only after that the first statement was made clearly referring to European integration. The prime minister said that Poland's contribution to the uniting Europe would be respect for the moral principles. It would be difficult not to notice that the statement concerning the EU was much more prudent compared to the enthusiasm with which the premier welcomed the accession to NATO.

A vast part of his policy statement was devoted to internal reforms which the government was planning to undertake, and the European context was only mentioned in the context of a new telecommunications law which was to be adopted “in line with the regulations binding in the European Union.”

When talking about the foreign policy, Buzek said that “Poland's priority would be, equally to accession to NATO, a possibly quick integration with the European Union's structures.” Then followed the only fragment of his policy statement that referred directly to accession talks with the EU, which were to begin soon,

To us, the announced soon opening of negotiations with selected countries, and the fact that Poland is mentioned among that group, imply an obligation to co-ordinate the adjustment activities and to speed up the relevant processes. During the negotiations we will make sure that the Polish identity is respected in the course of implementation of the process of integration with European structures.

Thus, the prime minister talked about the obligations implied by membership, about the Polish contribution to the Union, and about safeguarding the national identity. But his statement lacked even a single word that would refer to the goals of accession.

When presenting the position held by the AWS parliamentary caucus, Marian Krzaklewski, the AWS leader and the caucus chairman, placed a much greater stress on the importance of integration with the European Union, and on the fact that the process was in line with the principles of Solidarity and the democratic movement dating back to August 1980. He said,

Let me quote the words of Germany's President Roman Herzog who said that, thanks to August 1980, thanks to the Polish Solidarity movement, Europe had recovered a chance for unity. It was that movement, which started in August 1980, that initiated the end of the great division of our continent into the free West and the enslaved East. Thanks to integration with the European Union Poland will get a chance to stimulate its economic growth. We will also obtain a real opportunity to make direct impact on the shaping of a new order in Europe. We will participate in the establishment of unity of the continent, while sustaining our own identity. We will preserve our Polish identity.

Christianity, and the commitment to freedom inseparable from Christianity, a responsible freedom, constitute the only lasting foundation of that European community. It was Christianity that the founding fathers of the idea of a common Europe were referring to.

Each of the statements quoted above reflected attitudes held towards integration with the European Union. The first attitude, let us call it a defensive one, is based on the assumption that the goal of the accession talks will be mainly to defend the 'Polish identity.' In that case, as one of political writers noted accurately, integration is a "sad necessity."⁸ The second attitude links integration with all the structural reforms that have taken place in Poland since 1989, and is based on the assumption that, in a longer run,

the country will not only manage to negotiate good terms of accession to the EU, but it will also be active in making an impact on the shape of the Community. It appears that the difference of attitudes to a large extent corresponds to the division existing within the AWS into a Christian-Democratic and a national faction.

The statements made by the prime minister and by the AWS chairman also contained fragments which one could hardly consider moderate and prudent. When Premier Jerzy Buzek was saying that moral principles constituted the Polish contribution to Europe, and when Marian Krzaklewski described Christianity as the *only* lasting foundation of unity, their words implied an evaluation of contemporary Europe as being devoid of any principles, and delineated a plan for a future community that could be described as monocentric.⁹ That naturally created a great opportunity for criticisms by the opposition. The exchange of views that followed may be treated as an illustration of a certain mechanism underlying Polish parliamentary debates, which spurs disintegrating forces, thereby making dissenting parties diverge dramatically rather than converge in their positions. The same pattern of discussion has been recurring in subsequent debates held in the Sejm and in the Senate. Sejm deputies from the SLD immediately responded to any references made concerning the role of Christianity in the building of European unity, and criticised such references on behalf of pluralism and a secular state. On the other hand, that supplied politicians from the AWS-UW coalition with an opportunity to reproach SLD deputies for their political past, when they were part of a system which was a contradiction of the principles of democracy and tolerance. Thus, the political debate was held along two trains of thought, thereby becoming a kind of a ritual, or a ritual chaos as analysts of the public discourse have called it, in which representatives of the two sides taking part in the discussion make statements fulfilling the expectations of their supporters.¹⁰ As a result, to an observer, the consensus on European integration seemed even more uncertain than it actually was. After all, the public debate is based on the assumption that differences of opinion on the subject exist between the two sides, but

⁸ Beylin M., "Klimaty zastępcze," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 July 1998.

⁹ The clause of the government coalition agreement referring to Poland's accession to the European Union "on behalf of the moral and political values of the European tradition" was formulated in an entirely different spirit.

¹⁰ Cf. Czyżewski M., Kowalski S., Piotrowski A. (ed.), *Rytualny chaos. Studium dyskursu publicznego* [Ritual chaos: A Study of Public Discourse], Wydawnictwo Aurelius, Cracow 1997.

there is also a common area. Furthermore, the goal of the debate is to extend that common area and to determine the contentious points more clearly. When observing the debate on issues related to European integration, one gets an erroneous impression that, when the two sides talk about Europe, each of them is referring to two entirely different notions.¹¹

When presenting the position held by the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), Leszek Miller, the SLD leader, said,

A modern European state that is friendly towards the people, does not get involved in philosophical disputes. It is a secular state which effectively guarantees the freedoms to all its citizens, a state in which the law is not used to serve any philosophy, in which one's attitude towards religion does constitute grounds for either preference or discrimination, where the dignity of women is respected and no legal obstacles are placed against conscious parenthood.

The statement made by Krzaklewski was also criticised by Danuta Waniek, another member of the SLD caucus,

One thing was clear in both statements. That was an ideological message which I would describe as political Christianity because the moral values often referred to in the statements, serve to achieve political and even economic goals typical of the AWS. And you say as well, Mr. Prime Minister, that respect for the moral principles will be the Polish contribution to the uniting Europe.

Does Europe, which is uniting with us, already know about that? Has it agreed? During the process of Poland's integration with European structures, I have not noticed European countries bestowing upon us the mission of propagating a single moral system. On the contrary, Europe has based its post-war democratic order on tolerance, multiplicity and coexistence of various moral systems, on a play of political forces and a market economy.

¹¹ It is worth noting that, as shown by sociological research, the Polish political circles after 1989 share a number of common principles, mainly those related to approval for the democratic principles and mechanisms in political life. Researchers who surveyed the members of the previous parliament, wrote, "One should note the large importance attached (and rightly so) to the rule of law, political freedoms, and concern for the welfare of the people and a strong state." Cf. Wesołowski W., Post B. (ed.), *Polityka i Sejm. Formowanie się elity politycznej* [Politics and the Sejm: the Formation of a Political Elite], Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warsaw 1998, p. 44.

I am Polish, I live in Europe. Under any government, I want to draw from the entire humanistic heritage of Latin Europe, which is comprised of ancient philosophy, law, the cultures of many nations and religions, the Slavic heritage, the Orthodox heritage, Judaism, reformatory trends in Christianity.

Her statement was followed by a reply from Janusz Lewandowski, a liberal and member of the Freedom Union (UW),

We would like to thank Deputy Waniek for reminding us of all the European values on which her political organisation was building its identity for forty-five years.

Then the floor was taken by deputies Andrzej Urbańczyk (SLD) and Stefan Niesiołowski (AWS), as well as Izabela Sierakowska (SLD), whose statements followed the pattern delineated above. When Sierakowska was talking about women's rights, Deputy Michał Kamiński from the Christian National Union (ZChN, an affiliate of the AWS), recalled the civilisation backwardness that the current Polish state had inherited after years of communism.

Under these circumstances, one might expect that UW deputies would act as moderators in the debate between the AWS and the SLD. However, the statement made by Tadeusz Syryjczyk, chairman of the UW caucus, rather indicated a wish to keep away from philosophical issues by saying that "Europe was a common tradition, common roots, good and bad historical experience, and the values stemming from that." The subsequent part of Syryjczyk's statement contained notes that echoed the attitude held by the AWS, "We support activities undertaken on behalf of reinforcing the Polish national identity within a united Europe." It is difficult not to notice in these words something more than a declaration of political correctness with regard to Europe.¹² On the other hand, the UW statement embraced a new notion when Tadeusz Syryjczyk said, "Today, Poland has a chance to confirm its presence in Europe in the institutional sense by joining the Atlantic Pact and the European Union."

An explicit declaration that a united Europe means Poland's accession to the European Union, may seem too much of a tautology. However, these words have their

¹² Although, obviously, this is a peculiar kind of political correctness, characteristic of the Polish intellectual life in the past decade, which is based on the assumption that, with regard to integration with the European Union, every statement supporting the process must contain the phrase about "respecting national identity." Cf. Domosławski A., "Poprawni inaczej" *Gazeta Wyborcza* 25-26 April 1998.

weight in the view of statements made during the election campaign by the UW's coalition partner, which, as it has already been said, did not indicate clearly enough whether their authors really identified these two terms as equal. In fact, not all the politicians who supported the AWS manifesto agreed with that approach, as may be seen from the statement made by Deputy Jan Maria Jackowski (AWS - Radio Maryja). Jackowski said explicitly that he was against Poland's accession to the European Union, but his words were ignored by the media.¹³ On top of that, the deputy claimed that the AWS manifesto never envisaged accession to the Union, but only a unity of the European continent based on Christianity. The trick of using terminology to make the same words mean one thing when addressed to the supporters of integration, and something else when trying to ensure the support of Euro-sceptics, enabled the AWS to maintain its unity at the time of parliamentary elections. However, the need to preserve that unity resulted in a duality of opinion within the AWS-UW coalition as regards integration with the European Union. Differences between the wording of the government coalition agreement (which had to be approved by the pro-European UW deputies) and the policy statement presented by Premier Buzek (which was meant to convince the hesitating AWS politicians) were the first example of a style that was to become a method used permanently in Polish politics in the coming year.

Back during the negotiations on the establishment of the government coalition, Aleksander Smolar, a political scientist and member of the UW National Council, formulated an optimistic scenario for the development of the political situation in Poland. He wrote,

The centre-right majority creates chances for a decent compromise. Integration with the European Union will not be a hostile, external design in that setting, but an internal issue of the ruling camp. The UW will find its natural allies not only among the conservative, liberal, and Christian-Democratic AWS politicians, but also among the Solidarity union activists.

¹³ The statement was made at a news conference held by Radio Maryja on 31 October 1998, at the Art Gallery dedicated to Pope John Paul II. The conference was an event organised by these circles in response to the visit paid by representatives of the Polish Episcopal Conference to Brussels, after which the Catholic bishops expressed more clearly than ever their support for integration with the European Union.

*The European issue will not be the bone of contention between the enlightened and the backward, but it will be the subject of less conflicting discussions within the ruling camp which, at the same time, will be exposed to strong pressure from external forces such as the media, international markets, governments, parties, trade unions, the Churches, and the West. The pro-European attitude of the left-wing opposition will not be a blocking factor, but it will create an atmosphere of competition and positive pressure.*¹⁴

Barely two weeks after Smolar's article was published, the events related to the forming of the Jerzy Buzek government and the course of the debate held in the Sejm could undermine that optimism. The idea of replacing bipolar confrontation with a public debate in which there would be a place for many views and a deepened compromise was repeatedly blocked by political resistance.

Beginning of the negotiations with the European Union: the first test of the unity within the coalition

The appointment of Ryszard Czarnecki (ZChN) to the position of chairman of the European Integration Committee was to ensure support for the Buzek cabinet by circles fearing Poland's integration with the European Union.¹⁵ The European Integration Committee Act of 8 August 1996 stipulates that the Committee shall be headed by the prime minister or another person performing the function of the Committee chairperson.¹⁶ When the latter option was chosen, the Committee gained importance, as its chairman acquired the rank of a minister, member of the Council of Ministers. However, the aim of that arrangement was rather to create a kind of a system of checks and balances to counterbalance those politicians who were regarded as Euro-enthusiasts, and UW politicians in particular.¹⁷ In that specific case, the appointment of a ZChN

¹⁴ Smolar A., "Kiedy obywatele nie chcą rewolucji" *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25-26 October 1997.

¹⁵ As a commentator for the *Życie* daily described it after Czarnecki had already been dismissed, "the presence of a ZChN politician as the head of the European Integration Committee legitimised the integration process to its most ardent opponents." Cf. Ostrowski R., "Trzy <ale>" *Życie*, 23 July 1998.

¹⁶ The official journal *Dziennik Ustaw* 1996, No. 106 item 494.

¹⁷ Cf. the description of Ryszard Czarnecki as "a man who did not bow before the [two] Unions" by a commentator of the *Życie* daily linked with the AWS (23 October 1998).

politician to a ministerial post was to balance the appointment of Bronisław Geremek (UW) to the position of foreign minister. That system of checks and balances resulted in a situation when the competence of various government bodies overlapped, thereby leading to competence disputes. According to the same policy, Piotr Nowina-Konopka (UW), a politician known for his dedication to the integration process, became an under-secretary of state in the European Integration Committee. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, also from the UW, was chosen the chairman of the Sejm Committee on European Integration, but the AWS assigned Adam Słomka from the Confederation for an Independent Poland - Patriotic Camp (KPN-OP, an AWS affiliate) to be Mazowiecki's deputy. Deputy Marcin Libicki from the AWS became the chairman of the Polish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. He suggested the following negotiation strategy, "By threatening to refuse to join NATO, we can obtain from the Germans and from the Union better terms of accession to the EU." Other conditions which, according to Libicki, Poland should place with regard to the Union included a guaranteed possibility to leave the Union, and non-obligatory application of standards concerning the protection of human life, pornography, homosexual marriages, and the capital punishment. Thus integration should be limited to economic issues alone.¹⁸

In all of these cases, the UW politicians were counterbalanced by representatives of the AWS factions known for holding reluctant or even openly hostile attitudes towards the European Union in the past (sometimes a very recent past, e.g., Adam Słomka). That was the case with the ZChN, Minister Czarnecki's party which until recently had been the party grouping the most uncompromising critics of the pro-integration policy.¹⁹ On the other hand, when recommending Adam Słomka as a candidate for deputy chairman of the Sejm Committee on European Integration, Gabriel Janowski from the AWS said that "the candidate had been showing a great interest in international issues, and in the integration issues in particular," but he did not add that the candidate's interests were of carried a rather clear political bias.

It is not the goal of this report to evaluate the competence of persons holding government posts, or to analyse institutional systems. However, it would be difficult not

¹⁸ "Na jakich warunkach do Europy" *Rzeczpospolita*, 31 March 1998.

¹⁹ These are conclusions of the survey conducted among the political elite by Elżbieta Skotnicka-Illasiewicz, Ph.D., op.cit.

to take note of the fact that the public must have been aware of the arrangement adopted by the government coalition, which, in a way, provided for taming potential internal opposition via administrative measures. Especially the appointment of a politician from the national wing to one of the most responsible, and certainly the most prominent position in terms of contacts between Poland and the EU, must have made an impression that the government was “both for, and at the same time, even against” integration. Opinion polls show that during the period from April 1997 until February 1998, there was a major fall in support for Poland’s integration with the European Union. However, the decline in support was not accompanied by a growth in the number of respondents opposing integration, but only by an increase of the number of people who had no opinion on the issue. At the same time, it turned out that a vast part of surveyed Poles (44%) believed that their country was not well prepared for negotiations with the EU.²⁰ One may presume that the government policy related to the appointment of the European Integration Committee chairman, and the disputes concerning the appointment and the institutional placement of the chief Polish negotiator were among the reasons underlying these changes in the attitude held by the Polish people.

The Sejm and Senate debates on the government report concerning the state of preparations for negotiations with the European Union

A review of the developments that occurred during the initial period after the instatement of the Buzek cabinet shows that the expectations of European integration becoming the subject of a major debate dividing the right wing were not fulfilled. The government coalition, both the AWS and the UW adopted the rule of not criticising politicians who undermined the government’s pro-European policy, as long as the contesting politicians remained within the coalition. In the public debate, the only adversaries could be opposition politicians from the SLD. On the other hand, the SLD, which had no influence over the course of developments, and therefore no responsibility for the developments, adopted a strategy of criticising the entire government policy, even

²⁰ Cf. Kolarska-Bobińska L., Kucharczyk J., *Negocjacje z Unią Europejską - opinie Polaków* [Negotiations with the European Union - Polish Opinions], the Institute of Public Affairs, Research Reports, March 1998. Also published in *Studia Europejskie* No. 2 (6), 1998.

on points in which that policy complied with the SLD policy line. If one assumes that a pro-European attitude of a party is measured not only by ideological declarations, but also by the attitude towards reforms required by the adjustment processes, then the policy of the SLD is far from desirable.²¹ At the same time, the SLD deputies were particularly active in responding when challenged on ideological grounds.²² Although support for European integration is provided for in the manifestos of both right and left bending parties and blocs, the issue started to divide instead of uniting the Polish political arena. At this point, let us quote a fragment of the Sejm debate on the government's report on the state of preparations for integration with the European Union.

Deputy Jan Łopuszański, at the time still a member of the AWS and the ZChN, put forward a hypothesis that the consensus among the political circles concerning integration with the European Union, was a result of a plot contrived by politicians and the media,

Somehow, for the past several years, a vast part of the Polish political circles, regardless of whether left- or right-bending, with the co-operation of a great number of the media, have been trying to create the belief that there is a general agreement in Poland on joining that European Union. It is not true to claim so. Some politicians in Poland, especially during dialogue with right-wing voters, concede that Europe should be a Europe of nations, and at the same time suggest explicitly or implicitly that it is the European Union that is building a Europe of nations. This is another untrue statement.

Poland's accession to the European Union in its current shape would be disastrous for Poland.(...) The contemporary Union is dominated by organised anti-Christian forces, and their multidimensional domination is growing consistently.(...)

We have been presented with the government's report on the state of preparations of the negotiations on Poland's accession to the European Union. In the report, the government states that accession to the Union is one of the priorities of its policy. I would like to announce that neither this nor any other government following that path may enjoy the support from a number of representatives of the Polish political

²¹ Cf. Kucharczyk J., op.cit.

²² A list of such activities is presented in the article "Taktyka Odry" by Ewa Milewicz, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 April 1998.

right. In that sense, it is not true that the AWS fully supports Polish membership of the European Union.

The opinion held by Jan Łopuszański may be reduced to the statement that when the AWS manifesto was referring to the unification of Europe, its words could be interpreted freely by various deputies.²³ The words spoken aloud in the Sejm by Łopuszański may be treated as the symbolic beginning of the “post-consensus period” in the Polish policy towards the European Union.

When asked whether the government shared the opinion voiced by Łopuszański, and whether his statement was good for Poland on the eve of the negotiations, Ryszard Czarnecki replied that the AWS manifesto clearly referred to integration with the European Union, while the SLD deputies should,

come to terms with the fact that, for a good couple of years, Poland has had a freedom of speech thanks to the right-wing part of the Sejm. (Applause) And Deputy Łopuszański has availed himself of that freedom of speech. I disagree with Deputy Łopuszański, which, as it follows from my earlier statement. But I will fight for Mr. Łopuszański to have the right to present his opinions.

Naturally, all those present in the Sejm room could not presume even for a moment that the question asked by the SLD deputy had been meant to have police methods applied to Deputy Łopuszański in order to deprive him of the freedom of speech. But the aim of the statement quoted above was to stress the moral gap dividing the ZChN deputies from the SLD deputies, a gap resulting from the fact that, whereas the former group were defending the freedom of speech, the latter were part of a system which restricted that freedom. The aim of using such a figure of speech is to build or preserve the identity of one's own party not so much on the basis of common goals (which simply do not exist on that particular issue), but rather by referring to the heroic founding myth of the coalition (or maybe only of the political right). However, the price for defending the coherence of the government camp using that method, was a directly proportional reduction of chances for an agreement on European integration being reached beyond political divisions.

Nonetheless, when looking at the Sejm debate, one should note first of all, that it became probably the most serious and the deepest exchange of views held as such a high

level concerning integration. The adoption of the resolution concerning Poland's membership of the European Union with the votes of the coalition and the opposition should be considered a success. The resolution reads that,

Poland desires to become a member of a strong and coherent European Union based on the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, a Union of states, nations and peoples.(...)

The Sejm would also like to stress that the condition underlying the success of negotiations is not only the course of the talks, but also continuation of reforms and modernisation of the economy, as well as maintaining an appropriate level of public support for integration with the EU.

It is necessary to consolidate all pro-European initiatives for that purpose. The Sejm expects concerted co-operation among the parliament, the president and the government on behalf achieving optimum terms of Poland's accession to the EU.

Apart from the "Opening Statement for the Polish Negotiations of the Membership of the European Union" (which will be discussed later on), the resolution adopted by the Polish Sejm became the most definite expression of the desire of the political elite, both the coalition and the opposition, to work on behalf of integration with the European Union. Crucial points of the resolution are contained in the fragments cited above. The resolution constitutes an example of language in which one may talk about the values and goals of integration in a way that is acceptable to various ideological and philosophical orientations. It appears that the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity referred to in the document may enjoy the support of both the political right and left. Although articulated differently, and referring to different religious, philosophical and moral doctrines, they may constitute the area of what has been described as 'overlapping consensus' by John Rawls, the famous American political philosopher. The existence of such compromise seems to be a precondition of democratic politics.²⁴ In Europe, the social sensitivity, the belief that the goal of the state is not only to ensure the security of its citizens, but also to alleviate social inequality and to prevent social groups from being pushed off to a margin, constitutes an important element of the political programmes of

²³ An identical position was held by the earlier cited Jan Maria Jackowski (AWS-Radio Maryja)

²⁴ Cf. Rawls J., *Polityczny liberalizm* [Political Liberalism], Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1998.

both the right and the left.²⁵ On the other hand, the principle of subsidiarity, which is also referred to in the government coalition agreement, reduces to a necessary minimum the competence and powers delegated to the supranational level in the course of the integration process, and hence safeguards the interests of the national state to a certain extent. At the same time, that very same rule does not allow the national state to have a monopoly for power, by implying a maximum extent of local and regional self-government. To put it shortly, the principle of subsidiarity partly corresponds to the idea of a Europe of nations, but is not exhausted by that idea, and also propagates a Europe of regions as well as the rules of decentralisation and diversity in general. The relevant fragments of the “Opening Statement for the Polish Negotiations of the Membership of the European Union” were formulated in the same spirit,

Poland fully shares the principles that constitute the foundations of the unity of the European Union. We believe that a democratic system of government, respect for human rights, a society built on the principles of openness and pluralism, and a free market are the best way of organising a society. We share with the European Union both the values based on the common foundation of the Christian heritage, and the belief that integration is based on the principles of equality, solidarity and subsidiarity.(...)

*We observe with attention the growing practical importance of the principle of subsidiarity in the European Union. That principle guarantees respect for national sovereignty, ensures the exercise of competence by the regional and local authorities, and creates opportunities for active participation of local communities in the social and economic life of the states of the Union.*²⁶

In this context, it is worth noting that the resolution did not factor in the proposal supported by thirty-one AWS deputies, stating that “Poland’s goal was to achieve the European Union understood as a Europe of nations, based on the Christian roots and identity.” One may presume that, if these words had been included in the resolution, the document would have been adopted as a resolution of the AWS-UW coalition, and not of the entire Sejm.

²⁵ This has been the source of irritation of the orthodox economic liberals who complain that Poland lacks a true political right, and who interpret that situation as a sign of prevalence of the status quo.

Whereas the Sejm debate shows that the Polish political elite is capable of making a compromise and building an agreement on issues crucial for the future of Poland, the debate in the Senate became an example of a victory of particular interests and ritual chaos. As Senator Władysław Bartoszewski, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and European Integration, said, the debate held in the Senate had been meant to provide a political guideline for the government before the negotiations which it was preparing. However, the debate on the draft of the resolution started on February 19, and was not concluded until April 16, i.e., already after the accession talks had started. Furthermore, the adopted resolution contained a number of changes proposed to the draft, altering the initial text which was close to the Sejm resolution and to the Polish government's opening statement.

When presenting the draft of the resolution, Senator Bartoszewski voiced the hope that the debate would make a contribution to "increasing public involvement in the Polish foreign policy" and invited "all the political and social forces represented in parliament," and not just the supporters of integration, to participate in the debate. He said,

The process concerns all the people, also Euro-sceptics because their opinions, if expressed in a businesslike manner and well justified, stimulate thinking, presentation of arguments, discussion, and also constitute an element in the creation of a democratic order in our country. Therefore, there is a need for all well-thought opinions on the matter, opinions filled with concern over national interests, also opinions from the opposition not represented in parliament, and voiced via social organisations, through the media, etc.

The senators obeyed his words to such a great extent that the course and results of the debate differed considerably from the intentions of those by whom it had been initiated. The content of the draft resolution referred to the same content that was included in the opening statement. When recommending the draft, Ryszard Czarnecki said, "We want to be a first class member of the European Union, with all the obligations, but also rights and privileges. From the beginning of our presence in the Union we want Polish citizens to enjoy the same rights as those enjoyed by the citizens

²⁶ "Opening Statement for the Polish Negotiations of the Membership of the European Union," the text approved by the Council of Ministers on 24 March 1998.

of the member states of the European Union.” His words should be interpreted as indicating that, for the Polish side, the goal of the negotiations is to introduce the country into the “core nucleus of the EU,”²⁷ while minimising “transitional arrangements.”²⁸ However, the course of the debate, and the changes proposed and adopted followed a trend which, perhaps, may find the best expression in the words of Senator Adam Glapiński. When putting forward the proposal concerning the need to improve the balance of trade between Poland and the European Union, he said that he was not “a supporter of Poland’s membership in the European Union achieved no matter what the cost and circumstances involved.”

Due to a large number of changes put forward to the draft, Senator Bartoszewski proposed that the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and European Integration, and the Legislative Committee of the House, should hold a joint meeting and present a joint report. However, the committees did not manage to present their report by the appropriate deadline “due to numerous and partly contradictory changes proposed to the draft.”

Although the draft of the resolution already included the statement that the sovereignty of states constituted “the guaranty of respecting the principles of equality and mutual benefits of co-operating states,” and “may be the stimulus making European integration more dynamic,” the Senate decided that three similar statements should be added. Out of these, at least one (the second one cited below) was at odds with the opening statement, and was indicated as such by a representative of the European Integration Committee to a joint meeting of the Senate committees (the proposal was put forward by Senator Józef Frączek from the PSL, and supported by Zbigniew Romaszewski who described it as “an instruction for negotiators”).

Here are some of the changes that were finally entered into the draft:

THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND(...)

- having regard to the Polish independence tradition of European integration, reflected in the policy resolutions of the Congress of the League for the Independence of Poland in London, dated 6 June 1948,

²⁷ Cf. Popowicz K., *Cele strategiczne mandatu negocjacyjnego Polski z Unią Europejską* [Strategic Goals of the Polish Mandate for Negotiations with the European Union], the Institute of Public Affairs, Analysis, Warsaw 1998.

- *expecting that further development of the European Community shall respect the external and internal sovereignty of particular states and nations, while the role of supranational institutions will be limited exclusively to implementing the policy agreed by the governments of sovereign states,*
- *holding the belief that the sovereign national state shall remain to be the main constituent of the social, economic and political life in the European Union.*

The Senators also decided to extend the list of values on which Poland was to base its membership in the Union. The point was probably to fend off the relativism spreading in the West. The draft of the resolution contained the following fragment:

*holding the belief that, after the breakthrough of 1989, Poland consciously chose to be a member of the community based on **the foundations laid by democracy, respect for human rights, a free market economy and solidarity**, and that these principles have always been present in the free Polish political thinking, while their implementation was prevented by the political system imposed upon Poland after the Second World War.*

After the debate and the vote, the fragment indicated in bold script received a new wording:

the basic principles of the social order: truth, freedom, justice and solidarity, as well as the rules underlying the system of government: respect for human rights, democracy and a free market economy.

The character of other changes is also that of being for and at against at the same time. The draft reads that the Senate of the Republic of Poland

wishes to stress the special role that inter-regional and cross-border co-operation plays in the process of European integration.

In the final version, the following words were added to that fragment:

and the protection of the national cultural heritage in matters relating to the centuries old Christian and cultural tradition; inter-regional co-operation cannot imply weakening of the unitary character of the Polish state.

The attitude held by the Senate towards the principle of subsidiarity may also be reflected by the fact that the fragment of the draft stating that “Poland’s better

²⁸ Cf. “Opening Statement—,” part V.

adjustment to the rules of the Common regional policy should be encouraged by the administrative and territorial reform planned by the Polish government,” was crossed out from the resolution.

The correction quoted below (the added fragment is marked in bold script) served a similar purpose of watering down an initially clear statement.

[The Senate of the Republic of Poland] *voices the belief that, during its efforts to join the European Union, Poland should take into account membership of the Economic and Monetary Union, **while at the same time shall monitor closely the introduction of the monetary union in the member states, and reserves the right to evaluate the union from the point of view of the Polish national interests.***

Having compared the course of the debates in the Sejm and in the Senate, one may say that the ideas put forward in the two houses of parliament generally did not differ. In the Sejm, there was the statement made by Jan Łopuszański who declared an attitude opposing integration. Although other Sejm deputies following the Catholic-national orientation supported integration as the direction of the Polish policy, when doing so, they were using rhetoric perfectly resembling the one used by Łopuszański. It is worth quoting the words of one of the right wing deputies most active in that area, Michał Kamiński from the ZChN, who, according to the transcript of the Sejm meeting, was applauded for saying, “We do not support a Europe of abortion, a continent legitimising deviations. We will never support that concept of integration.” On the other hand, deputy Kamiński used the following words to express support for integration:

I believe in the strength of the Polish nation, and I believe that the Polish nation will cope with the problem that is now called European integration.

Thus, for the part of the ruling elite, which applauded the words spoken by Kamiński, integration poses a problem that may not only be resolved, but also overcome. Such opinions expressed by members of parliament did not prevail during the Sejm debate, but they dominated the debate held in the Senate, and produced a major effect on its outcome. If part of the national right support integration because this complies with the Polish national interests, while another part oppose the process due to the fact of its being at odds with these interests, that support is based on more bristle grounds than one could expect. In his address, Deputy Kamiński contrasted national interests with ideological exaltation. However, one could hardly ignore the fact that the very category

described under the heading of national interests contains, not to put it bluntly, a strong ideological component.

If the debates held in the Sejm and in the Senate are to be treated as an introduction to the ratification debate that will take place after the completion of accession talks with the Union, already now one may see a real threat of the debate being prevailed by disintegrating forces seeking to attribute to the integration issue a clearly partisan dimension. That poses a threat of the right and the left formulating their own concepts of integration, which will be unacceptable to their respective political opponents. There is a threat that, while being concerted on the strategic goal, politicians will be divided according to the lines of their affiliation to political parties, and will support only the version of integration that will comply with their own political correctness.

If the Senate could not agree upon the text of the resolution for two months, what can one expect of the ratification debate when, as provided for in Art. 90 of the Polish Constitution, a majority of two-thirds of votes cast in the presence of at least half of the deputies/senators will be required in support of ratification? On the other hand, if the ratification were to take place by way of a nation-wide referendum, the Constitution requires a minimum turnout of 50 percent. The experience related to the constitutional referendum which was strongly effected by the polarisation of the Polish political arena, shows that it will be necessary in this case to take action on behalf of a lasting agreement on integration.

The conflict concerning control over the aid funds provided under the EU grant assistance programme PHARE, which dominated the public debate on European issues during several subsequent months, produced just the opposite results.

Conflict over PHARE funds and the reshuffle in the Committee for European Integration

The factor that provoked an open conflict concerning control over the European Integration Committee, and thus over the attitude towards the European Union and the integration processes, was the decision of the European Commission to reject some of the projects proposed by Poland for financing under the PHARE programme. The loss of

34 million ECU caused a major commotion among the public, that resulted in Prime Minister Buzek dismissing Sławomir Zawadzki from the post of secretary of state in the European Integration Committee. A special commission was also appointed to examine the reasons underlying the situation and to determine the line of responsibility.

A lively debate was already going on in Poland for some time about the institutional placement of control over aid funds coming in from the EU. The question was whether the resources should be under the supervision of the European Integration Committee or of the Finance Ministry. From the beginning, positions held on the issue were largely influenced by political factors. Those who opposed the idea of entrusting the Finance Ministry with the role of a cashier with regard to aid funds indicated that the control of the money would be taken over by the UW whose chairman is the finance minister at the same time. This way, the powers of Minister Ryszard Czarnecki designated by the ZChN would be curtailed. The discussion on the issue which, objectively speaking, should be of a technical-administrative character, developed into a crisis of the coalition and showed (once again) that within the government, there were at least two attitudes towards Poland's integration with the European Union.

In May 1998, the Sejm Committee on European Integration held its eleventh meeting. The meeting was dominated by the issue of lost aid funds. According to the earlier agreed agenda, the Committee was to hear a report on the allocation of PHARE funds.

In his address to the Sejm Committee, Ryszard Czarnecki stressed Poland's readiness for accession talks with the EU, and a proper co-ordination between ministries. Thus, according to the minister heading the European Integration Committee (KIE), the blame for the loss of 34 million ECU did not lay with the Polish side. Opposition deputies from the SLD were not satisfied with these explanations. They asked whether the fact that KIE was not headed by the prime minister did not produce a negative impact on co-ordination of work between ministries (deputy Jerzy Jaskiernia, SLD). SLD representatives also stressed the explicitly indicated or suggested (e.g., in the statement by Minister Czarnecki) political motives underlying the decision made by the European Commission. Józef Oleksy (SLD) said,

In future, in relations with the Union and the European Commission we will oftentimes be faced with a stubborn and firm attitude held by the EU, which one will no longer be able to regard as interference with internal affairs (...)

Adam Słomka immediately replied to Oleksy's statement,

In this context, the remark by Deputy Oleksy that we have already experienced the situation of being subordinated, obviously states a fact. With a lesser or greater pleasure, we have gone through the experience of being subordinate to Russia. But at the moment we are dealing with an entirely different problem, and one cannot say that this is a historical issue. As far as the East is concerned, I agree that it is. The issue of safeguarding Polish interests, not only the historical ones, is not a matter of history, but a perfectly real problem. Therefore, the issue requires a serious debate.

That short exchange of views seems to provide a perfect illustration of what I earlier described as programmed ritual chaos in Polish debates on European integration. The strategy adopted by the representative of a small group of Sejm deputies opposing Poland's accession to the European Union, involved establishing a vague link between integration with Poland's subordination to the Soviet Union in the past, and on stressing the role that former members of the PZPR communist party, who are now SLD activists, played at the time. Two goals could be achieved that way. The first one is undermining European integration as a policy goal, and the second goal is preventing the possibility of a compromise being sought on integration by both the current ruling coalition and the opposition.

Minister Czarnecki declined to comment on the stance adopted by the ZChN which suggested that political motives underlay the decision made by Brussels. He excused himself by saying that he was attending the meeting of the Sejm Committee as a government member. The minister limited himself to saying that there had been no substantial grounds to reject the Polish projects. However, the position held by Minister Czarnecki was not fully backed by Maciej Kozłowski, representative of the Foreign Ministry, who presented the following view,

In our opinion, the greatest problem was the fact that the projects were presented on May 15, which was the deadline. Therefore, there was no time for a normal procedure used in negotiations between the EU and countries applying for aid under the PHARE programme, that is, sending back the project to be corrected. At that time, the European Commission could either approve or reject the projects because the date May 15 had been set as the deadline. If the projects had been put forward to Brussels, for example, on May 1, there would have still been two weeks for possible discussion.

Vice-Minister Kozłowski also provided an explanation on another issue which, in the question asked by Deputy Michał Kamiński from the ZChN, supplied circumstantial evidence to justify the theory that the slashing of aid for Poland by 34 million ECU was an attempt to alter the alignment of forces in the AWS-UW coalition. The question referred to the statement made by Hans van der Broek that maybe, the money had not been lost without a chance of being recovered. Since the statement was made in a conversation with then Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek, a suggestion was made that the entire scandal might have been contrived in order to give Poles the impression that the UW was recovering funds forfeited by the ZChN. Vice-Minister Kozłowski, and after him also Tadeusz Mazowiecki stressed that there had been no mention of recovering the money, but only that the money will be re-allocated to the general pool of aid for the candidate countries. Then, Poland just like the other countries would be able to apply for part of the amount after proposing new projects.

Some of the AWS deputies were not convinced by these explanations. Deputy Marian Dębiński said that the whole thing was “a political game played both by the European Union, and by one of the political forces in Poland.” It was also a “political attack” against Minister Czarnecki, “the only minister who was taking into account patriotic and national aspects when talking with the European Union.” Deputy Dębiński concluded his statement with the following dramatic words,

The name of the painting by Franciszek Starowieyski displayed during the opening of the diplomatic post in Brussels is now turning into reality. At the beginning we were shocked by it, but now one may notice the coincidence, and it seems that the artist's vision contains an element of truth.

One should remember that the huge painting hanging in the newly opened building of the Polish Embassy in Brussels, depicts “the Divine Poland” being captured by “the Mechanical Europe,” and appears to illustrate the nightmare of a Euro-sceptic. The fact of the painting being used to decorate the Embassy in Brussels specifically, may be interpreted as a figurative equivalent of the attitude of being both for and against integration, which is characteristic of a large part of the Polish political elite, as we have been trying to demonstrate in this report. Using the mythological context to which the author of the painting was referring, the threat posed by that attitude is the threat of Europe being captured by disintegrating forces fuelled by the rhetoric of defending the

national interests, and accompanied by an inseparable suspicion of these interest being betrayed.

It is symbolic that this tough attitude was supported by Stanisław Kalemba, representative of the PSL peasant party who viewed the rejection of Polish projects as an attempt to prevent Poland from establishing effective mechanisms to inspect imported foodstuffs. Regarding the conflict over administration of the assistance funds, Kalemba said that he was not convinced “that it would be best if the Finance Ministry handled the issue. Representatives of the Finance Ministry supervised the money which has been lost due to the scandal involving the Foreign Debt Servicing Fund (FOZZ).” That not very subtle insinuation was combined with a kind of an initiative of extending a hand towards the AWS, “it would be the best if the Finance Ministry took over the control, but also if the AWS took over the Finance Ministry.” That statement seems to be meaningful to the extent that it indicates a theoretical possibility of a Euro-sceptical coalition being formed by the AWS and the PSL on the political right. Although in the current alignment of forces in parliament, the PSL does not have a sufficient number of votes in order to be an attractive partner in such an alliance, but nevertheless, that policy convergence will be certainly brought up often at times of political crises, especially in the context of the relative success of the PSL in the local government elections held in October 1998.

The statements made by Kamiński and Dębiński were severely criticised by UW politicians. Janusz Lewandowski asked ironically whether the Sejm Committee on European Integration should “reprimand the European Commission, and at the same time propose a possible replacement of the Commission’s members by others that would have a more favourable attitude towards Poland.”

On the other hand, Józef Oleksy speaking on behalf of the SLD, said that discrepancies within the government coalition concerning the mechanisms governing contacts between various Polish institutions involved in the European integration process, posed a threat “to Poland’s strategic goal which was the achievement of membership of the European Union.” He also made an appeal concerning disputes over the philosophy of integration, that should not be transferred on the working procedures used during discussions in Brussels. According to the SLD politician, a Polish lobby beyond the divisions into parties should be established in Brussels in order to avoid a situation when aid funds would be slashed again. The entire statement made by Józef Oleksy appears to give a clear signal that the government coalition (and the UW in

particular) should not count on the SLD providing unconditional support during the disputes with Euro-sceptics. Although the SLD policy supports integration, the bloc expects to be acknowledged as some kind of a partner in the implementation of pro-integration objectives. The statements made by SLD representatives in the Sejm and Senate contain a greater number of such suggestions.

In other words, converging programmes alone (which consider integration with the European Union to be Poland's priority), are not enough in order to ensure support reaching beyond political divisions, for specific measures undertaken in that direction. Anyway, attempts at building such agreements between parties constitute the target of continuous attacks by some of the AWS politicians trying to prevent alliances of that kind. As an example of such thinking, one may quote the statement issued by the ZChN Policy Committee after Prime Minister Buzek had decided to dismiss Ryszard Czarnecki from the post of the European Integration Committee chairman. The party stated that "the main line of conflict ran between the ZChN on the one hand, and the UW and the SLD on the other, and concerned the concept of Poland's presence in the European Union. It was a matter of a tough or obedient strategy for the negotiations," which, according to Michał Kamiński, could only be guaranteed by Ryszard Czarnecki.²⁹ As far as the SLD is concerned, as it has already been mentioned in this report, that suspicious attitude dates back to the period when the PZPR enjoyed the political monopoly in Poland, guaranteed by the power of the Red Army. On the other hand, regarding the UW, the peak of the rhetoric accusing the party of betraying national interests was observed during a short campaign launched by the *Życie* daily following the alleged congratulations offered by Leszek Balcerowicz, the UW chairman and finance minister, to Brussels on the decision to slash the aid assigned for Poland. According to the authors of the reports, that was to be the key evidence that the EU and the UW had been plotting against the minister who did not bow to the Unions.

The crisis provoked by the conflict over administration of the assistance funds and the discussion concerning the reasons underlying the loss of 34 million ECU was resolved through decisions made by Premier Buzek who took over the chairmanship of the European Integration Committee himself. The function of the cashier with regard to the aid was taken over by the Finance Ministry. Maria Karasińska-Fendler was appointed

the Committee secretary. In a number of press interviews, she said that to her, it was not important to “talk about defending national interests, but to keep a good watch on simple technical matters.” Ryszard Czarnecki was appointed a minister without portfolio in the Premier’s Chancellery, and was made responsible for informing the people about issues related to European integration, while Piotr Nowina-Konopka who had been in conflict with Czarnecki, was appointed the deputy of Poland’s chief negotiator Jan Kułakowski, and was made responsible for making social partners involved in the negotiations.

In the wake of the crisis: The Polish political right vis-a-vis the emergence of anti-European opposition

Many commentators agree that an important event was the departure of a group of right-bending deputies linked with Radio Maryja from the AWS. Although the direct reason underlying their withdrawal from the caucus was not related to integration issues, but to the sale of the Stocznia Gdańska steel mill to an unknown investor, the group was established by deputies who referred to their being in opposition against integration, as one of the main elements of their political image. This is how Piotr Jaroszyński, professor at the Catholic University of Lublin and president of the new association Rodzina Polska [Polish Family], synthetically expressed his attitude towards the European Union,

*What kind of a creation is it? If there are to be no nations but only some societies, if abortion, euthanasia and homosexual marriages are to be legitimate, is that a formation or a malformation? The EU plans concerning Poland are to weaken our position, to strip us of independence and to cut the people down to the size of labourers working for the West.*³⁰

Concerning the government coalition, the Rodzina Polska president says that “the goal of their activities (...) is non-Polish. Unfortunately, it is international. They want to incorporate us into the European Union.”³¹ Jaroszyński goes much further than the ZChN in tracing the plot against Poland, in which all the parts have already been cast. In

²⁹ Quoted after *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 July 1998.

³⁰ “Nic nie jest takie, jak się wydaje,” Jarosław Kurski’s interview with Piotr Jaroszyński, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 October 1998.

³¹ Ibid.

his opinion, not only the SLD and the UW, but also the AWS are acting to the detriment of Poland.

One should not overestimate the role which Poland Family may play in the Polish policy towards the European Union. Bearing in mind the organisation's very poor results in the local government elections, and comparing the figure with the spectacular success scored by the AWS, one may presume that voters definitely reject anti-European parties, just as they did in the 1997 parliamentary elections. However, the presence of the anti-European political right is not without a significance for the ideological balance of forces on the Polish political arena. This way, the ZChN, with its whole basically negative vision of the European Union, may pass for a moderate party. This way, the Polish political correctness with regard to Europe implies not only, or even not mainly support for integration, but also a simultaneous placement of numerous conditions and reservations concerning that support, with full list of these objections making integration look like a sad necessity. Here is one of the leading politicians from the pro-European faction of the ZChN, who compares the unification of Europe to the fall of the Roman Empire,

*We can neither stop nor evade European integration. It does not matter if I look at it with regret or hope. I am simply stating a fact. Just like in the afternoon it becomes clear that the sun will be setting, just to quote the farewell letter from Petronius to Vinicio.*³²

The mood of the Polish debate held in the past year on European issues has been determined by the political right, and that fact may be easily explained by the fact that the government in Poland is run by the AWS-UW coalition in which the AWS plays a dominant role. One may say that this has restored a certain balance to the debate, while forcing politicians and intellectuals connected with the right wing to formulate broader outlooks and embark on a deeper discussion. From that point of view, the most positive aspect of the government having been taken over by the centre-right, has been enabling representatives of the Polish Roman-Catholic clergy to feel more free when making statements about Europe, without fearing that that this will be interpreted as support for

³² "I have run away from emotions," Wojciech Załuska's interview with Henryk Goryszewski (ZChN), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 July 1998.

a particular political orientation. Adam Szostkiewicz, a political writer publishing in the *Tygodnik Powszechny* weekly noted,

*After the elections in September 1997, post-Solidarity elements took over the power, which created a completely new situation also for the Catholic Church in Poland. As one may recall, the post-communist left was supporting European integration, no matter whether or not it was consistent in doing so, but that is a different thing. So if the bishops made that gesture during the period 1993-1997, during the time when the centre-left coalition was in power in Poland, that could be very easily interpreted as an act of support for the political alignment of forces at the time.(...) The current government is much closer to the Church, and additionally, has a chance for functioning in a stable way. Therefore, it was possible to give a sign indicating that the Church as a specific institution supports the pro-European direction of the state policy.*³³

This is a change of direction predicted in the earlier quoted text by Aleksander Smolar, making integration the subject of an internal debate of the political right. Following that train of thought, one could also expect that openly anti-European statements made by some politicians will facilitate the rest in reaching agreement on the goals and attitudes towards integration. However, the developments that led to the crisis related to the PHARE fund, show that coalition politicians were rather ready to carry on their line adopted during the 1997 election campaign, of formulating political goals in a way that could satisfy at the same time both the supporters and opponents of a dynamic pro-integration policy. An example of that may be the phrasing of the document prepared by the European Integration Committee about the goals of the information campaign that was being prepared. The document states that the goal of the campaign is to be obtaining the public's support for Poland's good membership of the European Union. Someone naive might presume that the achievement of a good membership was the goal of negotiators, and not of the institution responsible for informing the people about integration. However, the sense of these words is completely different. Here the relevant services carry out their obligation resulting from the goals declared by the coalition, and at the same time, comfort the Euro-sceptics. But the price for adopting such an approach is low effectiveness of the actions taken, and one should expect that the campaign

conducted on the basis of thus formulated goal will end in a political defeat similar to that suffered by the idea to appoint a politician representing a party seen by the public as reluctant towards Europe, to be the head of the European Integration Committee. In other words, it is very convenient to adopt the attitude of being both for and against when there is a need to create broad coalitions for the elections, but that approach has a paralysing effect when it comes to making and implementing decisions.

The dilemma with which the Polish political right is coping at the moment seems to be somewhat similar to the dilemma felt by representatives of the Catholic Church under the SLD-PSL coalition, as it has been described by Andrzej Szostkiewicz. The dilemma involves a need to express support for integration in such a way that one would not be accused of Euro-enthusiasm which is the attitude identified with the left wing. The fear of not demonstrating the differences from the UW and the SLD as not distinct enough is now built into the attitude held by the Polish political right towards integration.³⁴

Nonetheless, while bearing in mind these ideological limitations, one should note that the way of thinking of the right wing concerning European integration, seems to follow two orientations which I have earlier described as a Christian-Democratic and a national one. The Christian-Democratic orientation, whose main representative is Marian Krzaklewski, the AWS leader, tries to relate to the fact that the founders of the European Union were Catholic and represented the Christian-Democratic wing of the European political arena. Thus, those who follow that line want to establish close contacts with other European parties, and to look for something that might be described as politics beyond borders. They believe that the Polish political right should participate actively in the shaping of the European political arena, and thus also the European

³³ "Polski Kościół a integracja Europejska," a discussion held at the editorial office, *Europa* No. 4, 1998.

³⁴ An extreme example of that approach is the article published by a right wing writer Rafał Ziemkiewicz (the *Polityka* weekly, 10 January 1998), in which the author analyses the threat of a possible split within the right wing on the grounds of a difference of opinion on European integration, and a formation resembling that of le Pen being established in Poland, which would mean a disaster for the AWS. According to Ziemkiewicz, such a solution would be particularly welcome by „the post-communists and the part of the UW which is particularly influential in the media, and which wants to manoeuvre the party into national reconciliation (i.e., agreement between those who quit the communist party earlier and those who stayed its members till the end).” The article by Ziemkiewicz provides a good review of the reasons why the AWS leaders continued to ignore the existence of internal opposition which they considered to be a lesser evil.

Union, following a direction in line with the social teaching of the Catholic Church.³⁵ The greatest challenge entailed by that approach seems to be the rejection of the missionary note with regard to Europe, while according to that missionary approach, the goal of the political right is to convert the fallen continent. The idea of turning new Evangelisation into a political programme guarantees that its preachers will be disqualified as partners by the European political right.

Right wing national groups, and especially the ZChN, constitute ideological competition for the Christian-Democrats. Michał Kamiński, the chief ZChN expert on European issues and member of the Sejm Committee on European Integration, regards the extreme German Christian-Democrats as allies of the small group of extreme left aiming to abolish national states in Europe. Concerning the Christian-Democracy, he believes that it is

*an idea to incorporate Catholics into the reality of a liberal state in which the law of the land often takes priority before the laws of nature, so, for example, votes are held on killing unborn children. A state in which Catholics constitute only one of many social groups, like stamp collectors, homosexuals, or bird keepers—In terms of the ideological outlook, the western Christian-Democracy suffered a total defeat, in none of the countries it has managed to prevent de-Christianisation.*³⁶

According to Kamiński, an alternative to Christian-Democracy is the “pragmatic” right wing national orientation. When asked what the European Union was, the ZChN politician replied that it was

a common market. And on top of that, so to say, a purely technical creation that makes it possible to solve certain problems at the international level.

Kamiński claims that he agrees with the opinion held by Jan Łopuszański (a representative of the non-pragmatic orientation) that Western Europe is now an area of de-Christianisation, but notes that such developments are not identified with the European Union.

That great transformation of the civilisation is of a global character. It would have been also taking place if there were no Union. It is a result of the mass culture, the

³⁵ The manifesto of that approach was the article published by Bartosz Jałowiecki in *Życie*, “Is Europe Waiting for the Polish Political Right?” (21 January 1998).

*media, democratisation—One must oppose the negative its effects, but that cannot mean combating the EU.*³⁷

However, Kamiński holds the opinion that the fight against democratisation and a liberal state will be taking place at the level of a national state, whereas European structures should remain to be just a place for technical bargaining, even if the price for that were to be alienation of the Brussels bureaucracy. Thus, the national approach does not provide for dealing in politics at the European level as a remedy to the deficit of democracy in Brussels. It is that attitude towards European politics, that constitutes the main difference between the two orientations. At the same time, politicians following the Christian-Democratic orientation seem less willing to describe the contemporary culture of the West comparing it to a disaster, but that difference appears to stem rather from the temperament of a particular politician than from the adopted ideological premises.

Agriculture as a national cause: the attitude of the PSL towards the Integration

During the parliamentary election campaign, the SLD and the PSL, the two parties that formed the government coalition at the time, held quite diverging attitudes towards European integration. The goal of the SLD was to demonstrate to the voters that its politicians were on perfect terms with the uniting Europe, and that Poland would join European structures smoothly if they were elected. On the other hand, the PSL tried to convince its potential voters that only by voting for the party's politicians, can the right protection of their interests be ensured in view of the upcoming accession talks. The PSL was referring to the image of negotiations as a zero-result game in which Poland could gain something only if the EU would lose at the same time. Because of that approach which is also typical of a large part of the right wing parties, the PSL could be considered a potential coalition partner by the victorious AWS, were it not for the fact that the peasant party did not win a sufficient number of seats in parliament.

³⁶ "A True National Democrat Is Not Afraid of the World," Wojciech Załuska's interview with Michał Kamiński, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 September 1998.

³⁷ Ibid.

Since the elections, the PSL policy on European integration issues has been following two simultaneous paths. On the one hand, the party was trying hard to fend off the suspicions of its being against integration, and stressed that it considered Poland's accession to the European Union a necessity. At the same time, the PSL was active in building a political platform to unite all the forces that had objections or reservations concerning the direction of measures related to integration, that have been adopted by the AWS-UW coalition. The way to enable the party to proceed in both directions was to be the establishment of the National Integration Forum by the PSL. The mood of the message announcing that the Forum would be set up, was very moderate. It reads, for example, that "every one agrees in supporting integration with the European Union as a strategic goal of Poland's national policy." However, the document contained some ambiguous statements. The authors of the idea wrote,

The priority goal of the Forum is to obtain wide support from political parties, trade unions and the public for activities oriented towards the achievement of the most advantageous terms of accession by Poland, while preserving the national identity.

The above wording of the statement determining the goal of the initiative implied one advantage, namely, it could be interpreted in two ways, depending on the attitude towards specific activities undertaken by the negotiating team. If the activities were evaluated positively, then the goal of the Forum would be to propagate support for the relevant actions. However, if the founders of the idea decided that the negotiators did not achieve good results, then their activities aiming to obtain support in order to achieve the most advantageous terms of accession might include, in an extreme case, campaigning for the rejection of the negotiated accession treaty due to its not being advantageous enough. The attitude held by PSL politicians towards integration, could be judged on the basis of their statements made during the debates in the Sejm and in the Senate.

Starting his speech, Jarosław Kalinowski, the PSL chairman, said that "Poland's accession to the European Union could be described as the treaty of the millennium, a landmark in the history of our statehood." However, he added right away that his party's general approval did not mean consent to integration no matter what the terms are. Therefore, Deputy Kalinowski said,

The theory presented by professor Kułakowski that we have to show far-reaching flexibility in order to achieve the membership as soon as possible, is unacceptable to us.

We want to achieve the membership, but not at any cost, and not at the cost of far reaching flexibility.

Then, the PSL leader enumerated the potential threats to which agriculture may be exposed in connection with joining the Union: a 30-percent unemployment, growth in the prices of food, electricity and fuel, and a growing exchange rate of the Polish zloty (which will eliminate Polish products from international competition). At the same time, Kalinowski addressed two proposals to the negotiators. The first one was that the government could not allow "a major reduction of Poland's agricultural potential," and secondly, it should make efforts "to provide Polish agriculture with the same measures to support structural reforms as those which exist or will exist in the European Community." In other words, the government should ensure for the farmers all the privileges resulting for the membership, but without any inconveniences such as a fall in employment in the sector, or a growth in prices of agricultural products. Given that definition of the mandate for negotiations concerning agriculture, any result of the talks will probably turn out not good enough, and might be undermined on behalf of supporting "the most advantageous terms of accession." The attitude held by the PSL towards the European Union consists in a characteristic duality. The Union is at the same time, a model to follow (when talking about the EU agriculture being exempt from the rules of the market), and a source of threats related to the future of farmers (when talking about Poland already having to enforce EU standards). A similar duality could be observed in the case of the demand for Poland to receive assistance from regional funds, while at the same time, the PSL did not hesitate to describe the reform of Poland's administrative division (undertaken with the goal of establishing self-governed regions) as a partition of Poland following instructions from Brussels.

The attitude towards the principle of free trade in land applied in the EU (with some exceptions) constitutes yet a separate matter. This is one of the issues whose significance goes beyond the economic calculation of gains and losses due to a certain symbolic meaning attached. The territorial integrity of a state is strongly linked with the sentiment of national identity, and in the case of Poland, trade in land always brings up fears concerning the future of the Western and Northern Lands [which before the Second World War used to be part of Germany]. It was this Polish complex that was stirred by the Bundestag resolution expressing support for the claims put forward by the German Landsmannschaften. In response, the Sejm came up with a resolution criticising the

Bundestag. On the Polish side, a particular role in ensuring a broad coverage of the issue was played by PSL deputies Jarosław Kalinowski and Janusz Dobrosz. They claimed that the Bundestag resolution implied a turnabout in the direction of Germany's foreign policy in order to try to undermine Poland's rights to the Western and Northern Lands.

This started a mechanism accurately described by Klaus Bachman,

*On both sides of the border, those wishing to bring the Polish-German relations to a head managed to blackmail more moderate forces that bent under their pressures, fearing that otherwise, the radicals would accuse them during the election campaign of lacking patriotism. Hence, almost the entire Bundestag first voted for a trivial and completely unnecessary resolution, and then the Sejm, acting under pressures connected with the draft put forward by the PSL, endorsed a similarly useless and nonsense document.*³⁸

As I have been already trying to show, the mechanism described by Bachman was not the first example of the European debate being captured by extremist rhetoric. However, unlike in the situations cited earlier, when the disintegrating mechanism was spurred along the line between the political right and the SLD, this time it was activated by an impulse from abroad. We were dealing with a similar situation in the case of the crisis related to the PHARE fund when clumsy statements made by some Brussels officials provided a pretext for the building up of the theory of a conspiracy contrived by the UW and the EU.

In the article quoted above, Klaus Bachman noted that the voices calling for a transition period concerning the purchase of land by foreign nationals in Poland, were very convenient for those German politicians who would like to restrict the right for Poles to work freely in the EU. In response to that article, Janusz Dobrosz (PSL) wrote a letter to the *Rzeczpospolita* daily. He wrote that it would be best if Germans could not buy real property in Poland, and the Polish unemployed (why only unemployed?) had no obstacles in finding work in the EU member states. Thus, he reiterated the PSL doctrine that it is best to eat the cake and have it. However, later on in the letter Dobrosz suggested that, if he had to choose, he would prefer transition periods in both areas rather than liberalisation.

³⁸ Bachman K., "Pod presją obrońców ludu," *Rzeczpospolita*, 19-20 September 1998.

Apart from the National Forum, the second major initiative related to European integration issues, to have been undertaken by the PSL, was the campaign launched on behalf of holding a referendum. Also in that case (similarly to trade in land), the policy of the PSL intersected with that supported by part of the ZChN, and especially by Jan Łopuszański who put forward a similar proposal almost at the same time. Since the demand to hold a referendum was hardly contested by anyone, the campaign seemed useless until Jan Łopuszański came up with a proposal to organise the referendum even before the accession talks were completed. Jarosław Kalinowski initially supported the idea, but later withdrew his support, and thus the project seems to have been abandoned for some time.

Summing up, one may say that the future attitude of the PSL is to a large extent an open issue. It will depend on the effectiveness of the policy implemented by the current government in the area of agriculture (that will also be a major factor determining whether support for integration will be growing or falling among the rural population). Another factor will probably be the alignment of political forces. Depending on how efficiently temporary crises which polarise the political arena are handled, the PSL will either enter the national debate according to rules set by its own politicians when they were establishing the National Integration Forum, or it will be seeking a political *raison d'être* in an alliance with the Euro-sceptical faction of the political right.

Conclusions

During the past year, both major changes and a number of constant elements could be observed in the attitudes held by political parties towards integration. Despite the fact that a small group of politicians have broken up with the ruling AWS, and an openly anti-European opposition has emerged, the AWS-UW coalition is now much more consistent in implementing the policy oriented towards full and fast integration with the European Union, compared to several months ago, when it had to keep the pace with the slowest ones among its ranks. The report published by the European Commission on the eve of actual membership negotiations between Poland and the EU, confirmed that opinion by stating that that "integration with the European Union remained high on the list of the government's main political priorities."

The report contains a generally positive evaluation of the progress made by Poland on its way to integration. It also points out a number of areas in which the progress was unsatisfactory. The list of political requirements laid down in the report as preconditions underlying integration includes areas such as the civil service, the judiciary, or fighting corruption. According to the European Commission, dynamic measures need to be undertaken in all of these areas. The report also puts forward a recommendation to spare no effort in order to ensure that human rights and appropriate legal procedures are fully respected during the implementation of the screening law. In addition, the authors of the report note that, according to some human rights organisations, Poland should make efforts to improve the treatment of women. Probably it is not a coincidence that ideological confrontation took place in all of the indicated areas in the past year.

The report takes note of structural reforms undertaken by the government, and especially of the local government reform about which the authors of the document wrote,

For the first time a consensus was reached in this area between the government coalition and the opposition, and there is a hope that it will also facilitate the implementation of other reforms.

One may rephrase the statement quoted above and say that the greatest threat posed to the implementation of Poland's strategic goal, which is integration with the European Union, has not been the emergence of an open opposition, but a dramatic polarisation of the political arena, which has resulted in a trend to turn debates on just about any subject into ideological confrontation that finally comes down to the struggle between those enlightened and those backward, as the earlier quoted Andrzej Smolar put it. In that struggle there is no place for compromise beyond political divisions. As I have already shown earlier, contrary to the expectations, the trend for political debates to fall into ideological stereotypes does not seem to get weaker in the course of time.

Such an ideological stereotype paralysing integration debates, has been the alleged division into the supporters of tough and obedient negotiations with Brussels. The paradoxes implied by the demand to hold tough negotiations were described accurately by Krzysztof Popowicz. He argued that if by tough negotiations one understood talks aiming to keep Poland away from the Union's core nucleus, and to leave it in the European economic area, such negotiations would be welcomed by all

those interested in slowing down the EU enlargement process. This is what he wrote in his analysis,

Whereas during the previous enlargement waves the weight of the negotiations, in fact, rested upon the European Commission, the fall of the bipolar division of Europe, and the lack of a need to consolidate the Union's security against the threat posed by the communist bloc, have naturally shifted the main weight of the negotiations from the European Commission to the EU Council and particular member states.

*That change of proportion between the participation of the Union as a whole and particular member states in the negotiations, is highly disadvantageous for the candidate countries. Internal conflicts will be slowing down the negotiation process or produce far reaching compromises unfavourable for us. It is very likely that the global approach to thinking about Europe and a far-reaching vision of its development, will be replaced during the negotiations by particular and often conflicting interests of the member states.*³⁹

That scenario assumes that Poland, burdened by a large number of transition periods, will achieve a second class membership, thereby fulfilling the threat against which supporters of tough negotiations have promised to defend us.

When looking back at the history of what is now the European Union, one can see the great role played by the Jean Monnet strategy. That strategy involved implementation of political projects by translating them into the language of economic and technical decisions. Thus, political decisions were seen as being inevitable. In other words, that strategy comes down to transforming political decisions, that is, the expression of the free will of the community, into necessity, politics into anti-politics.⁴⁰ However, this is not the problem with the Polish policy on European integration. In Poland, we are rather dealing with technical, economic or administrative decisions being subordinated to efforts aiming to maintain a coherent ideological outlook and interests of the main political parties. A very characteristic example may be the story of the European Integration Committee which was placed outside the Foreign Ministry in order to reduce the powers of one of the ministries who were appointed by the president in the times of

³⁹ Cf. Popowicz K., *Poland - European Union: Three Scenarios*, the Institute of Public Affairs, Analysis, Warsaw 1998.

⁴⁰ My attention was drawn to that aspect by Aleksander Smolar.

stormy cohabitation between then president Lech Wałęsa and the government run by the coalition of the SLD and the PSL. Therefore, it is difficult to ignore the large doze of ill will shown by the recurring critical statements made by the current opposition concerning the institutional chaos related to European issues. During ideological debates, left wing politicians also speak as if there were only opponents of integration on the right side of the political arena.⁴¹ That way they meet the expectations of those politicians who see integration as a conspiracy between the SLD and the UW.

Thus, the greatest political threat posed to the process of Poland's integration with the European Union is the tendency to turn political debates into ideological confrontation between the political left and right. The key division line is not so much between the pro- and anti-European forces, but rather artificially established and stimulated divisions among those declaring support for integration.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g., Wiatr J., "Eurosceptycy nad Wisłą," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 November 1998.